

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 INR-10 H-01

PA-01 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 /054 W

-----104283 290411Z /64 S

O R 290311Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 780

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3578

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, CGEN, KS, US, US

SUBJECT: REPATRIATION OF KOREAN AIRLINES PILOT AND NAVIGATOR

REF: A) MOSCOW 9296; B) STATE 108893

1. DESPITE STRONGEST POSSIBLE URGING THAT INFORMATION PASSED MOFA'S PAK SANG-YONG AT 0230 APRIL 29 FROM REF. (A) BE HELD IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE UNTIL PILOT AND NAVIGATOR HAVE LEFT USSR, WHICH STRICTURE WAS RE-EMPHASIZED AGAIN AT 0930 APRIL 29, STORY SHOWN IN PARA 2 THIS MESSAGE WAS RELEASED BY HAPTONG IN ENGLISH AT 0128 GMT APRIL 29.

2. IMMEDIATELY ON RECEIPT OF TEXT I INSTRUCTED POLCOUNS TO CONTACT MOFA AND MAKE VIGOROUS PROTEST OVER THIS BREACH WHICH COULD ENDANGER RELEASE OF ROK NATIONALS. MOFA REPRESENTATIVE WAS SHOCKED BY NEWS THAT HAPTONG HAD RELEASED STORY AND RECEP- TIVE TO POLCOUNS URGING THAT MOFA TAKE POSITIVE ACTION TO DENY REPORT. WE WERE ADVISED AT 1045 APRIL 29 THAT MOFA IS DENYING REPORT. EMBASSY PLANS TO STATE NO KNOWLEDGE OF RELEASE PLANS IF QUIRIED.

(BEGIN TEXT) SEOUL, APRIL 29 (HAPTONG) -- THE CAPTAIN AND NAVIGATOR OF KOREAN AIR LINES (KAL) BOEING 707, FORCED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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CRASH-LAND IN NORTHERN RUSSIA LASTFRIDAY, WILL BE RELEASED FROM SOVIET DETENTION TODAY AND BE FLOWN TO COPENHAGEN, AN INFORMED GOVERNMENT SOURCE HERE SAID.

NO DETAILS ON CAPTAIN KIM CHANG-KYU AND NAVIGATOR YI KUN- SIK'S FLIGHT TO THE DAISH CAPITAL WERE IMMEDIATELY KNOWN.

THE TWO KOREANS WILL BE PUT ABOARD A SOVIET AEROFLOT IN
LENINGRAD TO BE TRANSFERED TO COPENHAGEN, THE SOURCE SAID.

THE UNITED STATES, NOW ACTING ON BEHALF OF SOUTH KOREA
WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON THE KAL INCIDENT, NOTIFIED THE KOREAN
GOVERNMENT ON THE RELEASE FRIDAY AFTERNOON THROUGH ITS EMBASSY
IN SEOUL, IT SAID.

THE KOREAN MINISTRY ALERTED THE KOREAN MISSIONS IN DENMARK
AND FRANCE TO BE PREPARED FOR THE REPATRIATION OF THE TWO
AVIATORS.

THE TWO CREW MEMBERS OF THE ILL-FATED KOREAN CIVIL JETLINER
WERE LEFT BEHIND FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION ON THEIR PLANES'S
VIOLATION OF THE SOVIET AIR SPACE WHEN ALL THE PASSENGERS AND
OTHER CREW MEMBERS WERE ALLOWED TO BE FLOWN OUT OF THE COUNTRY
LAST WEEKEND. (END TEXT).
SNEIDER

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NNN

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